Philippians 4:8

Intro. Paul’s letter to the Philippian brethren is one of Paul’s prison epistles being written between 60 and 62 A.D. in Rome. It was occasioned by the gift the Philippians had sent to Paul by the hands of Epaphroditus (Phi. 2:25-30) and which Paul mentions in Philippians 4:10-20. Thus, this book is a thank you note to the Philippians. He is writing to what some have called “his sweetheart church.” Thus, this book is a love letter from Paul to those whom he loves. However, this book is the fullest expression of Paul’s knowledge of Jesus. Notice Philippians 3:10 “That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;” We are to have the mind of Christ; Phi. 2:5 “Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.” To have the mind of Christ we must think the right things. That brings us to our text for this study; Philippians 4:8 “Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.”

I. PRELIMINARIES

A. This section of the book can be arranged as:
   1. Attitudes and actions which should characterize the life of every Christian; Phi. 4:4-7 “Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice. Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand. Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.”
   2. Instructions how to develop these attitudes; Phi. 4:8-9 “Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things. Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do: and the God of peace shall be with you.”
   3. Demonstrate how these attitudes can be used to live a successful life; Phi. 4:10-13 “But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at the last your care of me hath flourished again; wherein ye were also careful, but ye lacked opportunity. Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.”

B. THE KEY TO THIS SUCCESSFUL LIFE.
   1. Phi. 4:13
   2. Phi. 4:19 “But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.”
II. PHILIPPIANS 4:8
   A. Think on these things.
      1. A man is what he thinks.
         a. Pro. 23:7 “For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he: Eat and drink, saith he to thee; but his heart is not with thee.”
         b. Pro. 4:23 “Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.”
         c. Mat. 12:34-35 “O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. 35A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things.”
         d. Mark 7:21-23 “For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, 22Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: 23All these evil things come from within, and defile the man.”
      2. Thus, it is important what we think.
      3. Thayer says of this word that it is to “meditate on...with a view to obtaining.”
      4. Let us notice what Paul says to think on in our text.
   B. True.
      1. Importance of this being first.
         a. Many things are important; unity, peace, etc.
         b. Without truth all these other things are meaningless.
         c. Truth is the foundation on which the moral life is built.
      2. We know:
         a. That truth exist.
         b. That truth can be known, understood.
         c. We on an individual basis can know the truth.
         d. John 8:32 “And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”
      3. Truth.
         a. It is that which is true to fact, a representation of things are they are.
         b. Truth is grounded in the nature of God
            (1) Rom. 3:4 “God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged.”
            (2) Jesus is the revelation of God, thus the Revealer of truth.
               (a) Mat. 11:27 “All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him.”; Heb. 1:3 “Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;”
               (b) John 18:37 “Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.”; John 14:6 “Jesus saith
unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the 
Father, but by me.”

(3) Thus, that which is revealed in the Scriptures are the truth.

(4) We must think on the Scriptures.

(a) Psa. 1:2 “But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he 
meditate day and night.”

(b) Psa. 119:11, 15 “Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin 
against thee.... 15 ‘I will meditate in thy precepts, and have respect unto thy 
ways.’

(c) Psa. 119:97 “O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day.”

C. Honest.
1. This word is from a word which means honorable, venerable, noble or 
worthy.
   a. This leads to and inspires reverence and awe.
   b. The word is found 4 times in the New Testament and 3 of those times 
it is translated grave.
   c. It is the word that is characteristically used of the gods and the 
temples of the gods. It describes a man who moves throughout the 
world as if the whole world were the temple of God.
2. It is that quality that is characterized by soberness or seriousness 
(intellectually) but more that which has the dignity of holiness upon it as 
opposed to a frivolous flippant attitude.
3. It is those things that will elevate the mind of man.

D. Just.
1. The Greeks used this word to define the man who gives to god and man 
that which is their due.
2. This is the state of being right, doing ones duty to God, man and self.
3. Justice or righteousness are founded in God.
   a. Psa. 89:14 “Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne: mercy and truth 
shall go before thy face.”
   b. Deu. 32:4 “He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God 
of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he.”
   c. Rev. 15:3 “And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the 
Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true 
are thy ways, thou King of saints.”
4. This must refer to the standard set by God.
   a. We must be just according to God’s standard established in His Word.
   b. Rom. 1:16-17 “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of 
God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. 
17 For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, 
The just shall live by faith.”
   c. 1 John 3:7 “Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is 
righteous, even as he is righteous.”
E. Pure.
1. This is that which is morally pure; chaste, virtuous, undefiled.
2. We must be pure in:
   a. Doctrine.
      (1) Psa. 19:8 “The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes.”
      (2) Psa. 119:140 “Thy word is very pure: therefore thy servant loveth it.”
      (3) Pro. 30:5 “Every word of God is pure: he is a shield unto them that put their trust in him.”
   b. Thought.
      (1) Pro. 12:5 “The thoughts of the righteous are right: but the counsels of the wicked are deceit.”
      (2) Rom. 12:2 “And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.”
   c. Practice.
      (1) 1 Tim. 5:22 “Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men’s sins: keep thyself pure.”
      (2) In speech; Eph. 4:29 “Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.”
      (3) In actions.

F. Lovely.
1. This is from a word which means toward or to love. It is that which calls forth love.
2. Some have their mind set on things which do not bring forth love in others.
   a. He should not be of a crabby, irritable disposition.
   b. Some have their mind set on vengeance and punishment, that which calls forth bitterness and fear in others.
   c. Some have their mind set on criticism and rebuke which calls forth resentment in others.
   d. Instead he should be kind, gentle, generous, hospitable, etc.
3. We should think on that which is spiritually love.
   a. God’s love for man; John 3:16 “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”
   b. Christ love for man.
   c. Our love one for another as Christians.
   d. Our love for those in the world.
4. When one thinks on things that are spiritually lovely, it will reflect itself in his conduct and will call forth love from others.
G. Good Report.
   1. This word literally means sounding well, thus that which is fit to hear.
   2. This may suggest that which is verbally pure, that which is fit for God to hear.
      a. This would be opposed to ugly, false, impure words.
      b. This would be opposed to obscenities.
      c. That which is spoken in a kind, winsome way.
      d. May also refer to exalted truths and principles which lifts and exalts the soul.

H. Virtue.
   1. The word virtue is defined in three ways.
      2. Manliness.
      3. Power or manly strength.

I. Praise.
   1. This is that which is worth of praise or commendation, would include own conscience, and worthy of praise by men; 2 Cor. 8:21 “Providing for honest things, not only in the sight of the Lord, but also in the sight of men.”
   2. We must especially seek for the commendation of God.
      a. Commendation of God only comes by keeping all His commandments.
      b. In parable of the talents; Mat. 25:21 “His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.”

III. The Result.
   A. God will be with us.
   B. We receive peace.